LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of Labour Unity

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Editor: R. Palme Dutt

Murder Will Out * R.P.D.

How Labour Can Win * Harry Pollitt

Making the Poor Keep the Poor * Katherine Hood

My Six Hundred Million Friends * John Horner

Empire Premiers Meet * Idris Cox

Colour-Barred * A Nigerian in Yorkshire

Letter to Mendès-France * Arnold Zweig

Churchill's Self-Portrait * Pat Sloan

January, 1955

One shilling and sixpence

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IT TAKES MILLIONS

ANYONE in Britain is free to run a periodical, rich and poor alike—just as they are equally free to sleep under bridges. The meaning of this freedom is illustrated by the high rate of mortality among serious magazines in 1954; nowadays they are rare birds. On this a *Manchester Guardian* columnist remarks that the number *'now running without a subsidy is* very small indeed—the accountants have firmly taken over in what used to be the field of the literary enthusiast'. You must find a wealthy backer, or acquire—let me put it delicately—'dollar-earning capacity', unless yours is the official journal of some organisation. Wealthy backers, like Sir Bernard Docker and J. Arthur Rank (said to have dropped £80,000 in one publishing venture last year) want profitable returns on their money. True, in some quarters money is not the object: for the Americans are learning that their cold war propaganda, when elegantly written by British writers for British readers, goes down better than when purveyed in imported Yank magazines, glossy or ghastly. So there is dollar-encouragement for 'native' art forms—provided contents are duly 'screened'. Subsidised organs of political parties also have their troubles, financially and above all in circulation: ask Transport House! As to other forms of subsidy, it seems that 'advertising revenue has not kept pace with rising costs', to quote the swansong of an industrial bi-monthly. But most striking of all for LABOUR MONTHLY readers is this comment on the fate of *Britain Today*, with a circulation just like ours, but subsidised by the taxpayer. *'The 14,000 circulation contains very few complimentary copies. It costs £5,000 to £6,000 a year to circulate the magazine and the British Council has decided that it must cease next month.' (Manchester Guardian, October 22, 1954.)*

And so with every resource behind it, *Britain Today* failed to survive its fifteenth birthday. Now, when L.M. reached the age of 20—nearly 15 years ago—Bernard Shaw recalled the Frenchman who, when asked what part he had taken in the French Revolution, replied that he had survived it. Shaw added: 'The survival of the LABOUR MONTHLY for twenty years is a feat no less remarkable. The fact that its circulation runs into five figures, making it a lucrative vehicle of advertisement for books and other articles appealing to its special clientele (if only advertisers could escape from their well-worn grooves) is part of the prodigy; for I have never seen the L.M. exhibited for sale on a bookstall or otherwise pushed on the public.' (Here Shaw does less than justice to some of our good newsagent friends today.)

Without Millionaires

WITHOUT millionaires, without cold-war dollars, without vast advertising subsidies, without anything but readers' support, nevertheless on page 1 of this number we can print 'Vol. XXXVII'. Whence this 'remarkable feat'? Why is L.M.'s record unique? Because this magazine has a special

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Notes of the Month

Murder Will Out

'Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.'

JOEL iii, 14

UNDER threatening skies the Old Year closes and the New Year opens. Great victories for peace were won in 1954. The first steps, however limited, of the Four Power Conference. The success of the Geneva Conference. The end of the war in Vietnam. The first industrial atomic power station in the world functioning in the Soviet Union. The co-operation of India and China with the exchange of visits of Nehru and Chou En-lai. The defeat of E.D.C. But the closing months saw the return offensive of the maddened war camp. The London and Paris Nine Power Agreements for rearming Nazism. The South-East Asia Military Pact. The U.S.-Chiang Military Pact. The chain of Military Pacts in the Middle East. The open proclamation of the aims of atomic and thermo-nuclear war by the Western military commanders. The rejection of European Collective Security by the Western Powers. All these constitute the menace. They hold out the prospect of the hardening of the division of Germany, Europe, the world into two opposing military coalitions, engaged in a deadly arms race. Such

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a confrontation has always led to war in the past. It could only lead to war again, war of unexampled horror—unless the peoples act in time. The die is not yet cast. But 1955 is likely to prove the year of decision for the shape of the world to come.

A Warning Bombshell

Like a lightning flash across the darkened skies the episode of the Churchill Woodford speech and the alleged telegram to Montgomery in 1945 has illumined the entire Western aggressive war policy from the close of the last war to the present day. Woodford has bayed to Bonn; and all the released Nazi War Lords have sprung to click their heels in response to the call of the new Fuehrer. It was on Tuesday, November 23—within less than a week after the British Parliament's ratification of the plan for Nazi rearmament by a minority of votes—that Sir Winston Churchill chose to light the fuse to explode his deliberate and carefully timed bombshell. This was no accidental 'indiscretion' of an old man's memories. It was made 'not on the spur of the moment', as he afterwards emphasised. The text of the crucial passage was handed out beforehand. Deliberately he chose this moment to divulge that he had planned already to rearm the Nazis against his Soviet allies in the spring of 1945. He had planned to rearm them, while the bodies of the victims of Nazism still smouldered in the furnaces, while the war still raged with unparalleled intensity on the Eastern Front, and before even the war in the West had yet been officially closed. November 23. The call was answered as quickly as it was made. It was on the same evening of that same Tuesday, November 23, on the same evening as the Master of the Hounds blew his horn, that the View Halloo sounded from the Sportpalast in the oh-so-free West Berlin:

> At a meeting of the German Party, which is the junior member of Dr. Adenauer's Federal Coalition, people who failed to stand up promptly when the first verse of the old German national anthem was sung, were assaulted by uniformed officials of that party. They were ejected from the Sportpalast, where the meeting was held on November 23, with shouts of 'Jewish swine', 'Dirty traitor' and 'Time for you to go back to the concentration camps'. Present at the meeting and playing a leading part in it was Dr. Seebohm, Chairman of the German Party and Minister for Transport in Dr. Adenauer's Cabinet.
>
> (Open Letter of Herr Marx, Editor of the Düsseldorf *Allgemeine* to Chancellor Adenauer, *Manchester Guardian*, December 2, 1954.)

By his friends is known the man.

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There Must Be A Reason Why

Why did he confess? Why did the subject of Mr. Sutherland's candid portrait choose to celebrate the eve of his eightieth birthday in this far from pacific fashion? No wonder the official press, usually so slick to explain away a hundred damning confessions without the flicker of an eyebrow, proved this time at a complete loss for the first few days, bewildered, embarrassed, confused, at sixes and sevens, deprived of the customary official line handed out to them to tell them what to say. 'Why?' complained *The Times* in what must have been the shortest monosyllabic heading of a main editorial leader in its record. 'Why Did He Do It?' echoed the *Daily Mirror* in its own editorial heading—thus illustrating that the supposed popular press only differs from its august colleagues in being more long-winded. They were bereft of all their customary consolations to explain away such embarrassments. They could not suggest that a mysterious Tibetan truth-drug had been nefariously poured into his brandy before he left Downing Street for the wilds of Essex. They could not indignantly complain that his brain had been washed, since they were probably aware that that might require more detergent than the whole world contains. They could not even insinuate that dire hints had been imparted of a hideous fate awaiting Randolph and Duncan. They had to face the horrible possibility that he meant what he said, and that he was speaking the truth, thereby blowing all their favourite lies of the past nine years into smithereens. Still less could they face the painful fact that, exactly as in his Fulton speech eight and a half years ago, which similarly aroused at first universal expressions of horror and embarrassment before becoming absorbed into the official policy of both ruling parties, this master of the midnight oil, in his always most elaborately prepared speeches, has invariably exploded his bombshells with deliberate calculation and set purpose.

Diplomatic Wriggles

Certainly something had to be done to relieve the embarrassment. So the comedy followed of Hunting the Snark and the Case of the Lost Telegram and Monty scrabbling in his private cache of denationalised state documents—the harlequinade to take the mind off the tragedy. For a side-blast of the exposure not only hit the memory of President Roosevelt and the role of General Eisenhower as insufficiently anti-Soviet at that time and too conventionally loyal to the minimum obligations of an alliance. It also let loose a

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dangerous broadside at Mr. Attlee, Mr. Morrison and the other Labour colleagues of the Churchill Coalition Cabinet, who were placed in the uncomfortable predicament of sharing responsibility for a policy which they had never avowed and which manifestly governed the whole character of the post-war epoch. Either they knew and approved; in which case they would be convicted of the most hypocritical deception of the labour movement over the whole starting point of the Bevin anti-Soviet foreign policy (the pretence that initial cordiality on their side was only replaced by disillusionment as a result of actions of the Soviet Union in 1947 or 1948). Or they could plead that they did not know or sanction it; in which case they would immediately have to answer whether they now approved or repudiated this criminal decision. A cleft stick. No wonder Mr. Attlee preferred to remain primly silent, even when expressly mandated by the Parliamentary Labour Party to raise it. And when Mr. Shinwell, with his remarkable prophetic instinct for what the Premier desired to say, held out the suggestion that perhaps the document might be non-existent, the obliging Sir Winston handed out to them this little shaky raft of salvation with a gracious 'apology'—and proceeded to reaffirm the policy in even more emphatic and provocative terms.

Dropping the Mask

This revelation by Sir Winston Churchill was as deliberate a political act as Fulton, or as the release of the damning text of the Quebec Atom Bomb Agreement of 1943. It was an act of raising war tension. It was a calculated administration of shock to the British public to throw off the chloroform of the previous official propaganda fairy tales with which they had been indoctrinated, and to recognise that the British top-level anti-Soviet policy was a continuous policy dating from before the end of the Second World War and carried forward equally by Labour and Tory Governments. It was a Green Light to the Nazis. It proclaimed to them at last publicly the vindication of the policy of Goebbels and Doenitz and Goering in the last days, for the link-up with the British and American forces in a Western military alliance against the Soviet Union. It was designed to make clear to them that this public vindication was no new departure of policy, but that the programme had already been secretly planned and approved before the end of the Second World War, while the pretence of alliance with the Soviet Union was still being maintained.

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Goebbels' 'Iron Curtain'

In his 'apology' to Parliament on December 1, Churchill quoted at length what he was pleased to call his 'Iron Curtain telegram' ('the telegram which I have called "the Iron Curtain telegram" ') of May 12, 1945. But he did not inform Parliament from whom he had borrowed the phrase 'the Iron Curtain'. Indeed, the myth has become semi-official British gospel that the phrase was a new and unique Churchillian coinage. Such was the declaration of the characteristic *Daily Herald* editorial of November 25, which sought to wriggle around the deadly implications of the Woodford bombshell by pretending that the Labour Government was always friendly to the Soviet Union, and that Churchill's Fulton speech 'cut across Labour's foreign policy'—although in fact Churchill congratulated the Labour Government for carrying out his Fulton programme. This *Daily Herald* editorial of November 25 alleged that 'it was in the Fulton speech that Churchill coined the phrase "the Iron Curtain" '. In historical fact, the phrase 'the Iron Curtain' was first used by Goebbels in *February*, 1945—in order to advocate precisely the same policy of the link up of Nazism with the British and American forces in a Western military alliance against the Soviet Union. It was not only the phrase that Churchill borrowed from Goebbels without acknowledgment. It was also the policy.

Myths Blown Sky-High

But the effect of the Woodford revelation has been to cause no small embarrassment to the entire preceding official British propaganda (hence the especial anger of the Editor of *The Times* who had previously run the B.B.C. propaganda machine), and most of all to the right-wing Labour leadership. Their whole elaborate argumentation to prove from events since 1945 the justification why in the autumn of 1950 they had reluctantly become convinced of the necessity of Nazi rearmament, after having previously professed to oppose it, now lies in ruins. Transport House will have to pulp a lot of literature and change the line again. At every Regional Conference of the Labour Party organised before Scarborough to try to sell Nazi rearmament to an unwilling rank and file, an identical set piece was repeated by whichever right-wing leader was sent for the job.

Obsolete Fairy Tales

The Labour Government, it was explained, came into office bursting with good will and cordiality towards the Soviet Union

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(conveniently forgetting Bevin's violent anti-Soviet diatribe of August, 1945, which was hailed by the Franco fascist press as the first public proclamation of the new anti-Soviet crusade). Only gradually and unwillingly this inexhaustible fund of good will to the Soviet Union was step by step dissipated and exhausted as a result of a series of actions on the part of the Soviet Union, which pained, shocked and finally disillusioned the trustful, loving Labour Ministers. First in the catalogue always came the rejection of the Marshall Plan in 1947. Then there was the Russian armed coup in Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1948. Then there was the Berlin blockade and air-lift in the summer of 1948. Then there was the Russian aggression in Korea in 1950. As a result of all these 'events' the pacific, sadly disillusioned Labour Ministers came reluctantly to the conclusion that there was nothing for it but to inaugurate a gigantic rearmament programme, welcome American atom bombers to Britain, enter into a tight military Atlantic Alliance, and rearm Nazism in Western Germany, as the only way to stem the impending onslaught of the Russian Bolshevik hordes. Such has been the ceaselessly repeated fairy tale of Transport House and the *Daily Mail* singing in unison.

The Web of Lies

All this painfully fabricated structure of falsification has now been brought crashing by the explosion of the Churchillian bombshell. For if British official policy was already so hostile to the Soviet Union in May, 1945, as to give orders to be prepared to rearm the Nazis against them, then the citation of alleged events in 1947, 1948 or 1950 as the supposed reasons for the hostility or for the decision to rearm the Nazis, becomes not only dishonest, but irrelevant. In any case the impudent falsification or distortion of the alleged facts was already long familiar to students of affairs. Everybody realises today that the Marshall Plan was only the first stage of U.S. economic penetration in Western Europe, preparing the way for the subsequent military penetration, establishment of bases, and 'military aid'. Many know that there were no Russian soldiers in Czechoslovakia in 1948; and that the attempted coup of the right-wing Ministers was the sequel of similar coups under American pressure in France, Italy, Belgium, etc., displacing the liberation governments of national unity, in order to establish dollar-subsidised right-wing governments excluding the Communists, but that the same attempt to penetrate Czechoslovakia was defeated by the

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united resistance of the people and the establishment of a united working class and democratic government with the support of the parliamentary majority. Some even know that there was no blockade of Berlin; that the Western economic offensive to sabotage the agreement reached for a united currency reform over Germany as a whole and establish a separate West German currency (printed in Washington) compelled protective measures in the East, which were accompanied by offers to feed Berlin; and that Dulles subsequently admitted that the air-lift to Berlin was maintained, not for any reasons of economic necessity, but for political reasons to maintain the tension. Increasing numbers have since learned that Rhee's programme of the 'March to the North' was officially proclaimed in the spring of 1950, just as it is proclaimed again today; that deputies were imprisoned on the charge of opposing it; that Dulles, Bradley, Johnson and MacArthur were all gathered in the vicinity just before the offensive opened; and that the Soviet Union had so little inkling of what was afoot as to be absent from the Security Council when the illegal decision was rushed through to rubber-stamp the American aggression. But all these ancient controversies pass into the background and become irrelevant for present purposes, in view of the Churchillian admission that the Western anti-Soviet policy has deeper roots, entirely independent of these later events, and goes back to the Second World War.

Lifting the Curtain

For Sir Winston Churchill's admission has only lifted a tiny corner of the curtain from the murky events of the closing weeks of the war, when the Nazis were deliberately surrendering in millions to the West, while tenaciously endeavouring to continue the war in the East, and when the Doenitz Government was allowed to be maintained in Flensburg until American policy compelled its disbanding. Churchill's defence in Parliament for his policy of readiness to switch the alliances and embark on war, together with the Nazi armed forces, against the Soviet Union already in 1945 was that he suspected that the Soviet forces might advance beyond the agreed lines of demarcation, although he admits that they never did. The American forces under Patton and Eisenhower did advance very considerably beyond the agreed demarcation lines, but later correctly retired to the agreed lines. Supposing that the Soviet commanders had argued like Churchill and treated this advance as an issue for war, then on Churchillian principles the Third World War would have already begun. But the same Churchill who parades

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his unfounded suspicion that he thought the Soviet forces might have advanced beyond the demarcation lines, and that this would have been a just cause for war, simultaneously complains that the American forces ought never to have retired from the points they had reached beyond the demarcation lines, if he had had his way, until they had used their military position to impose dictated terms on the Soviet Union. In other words, the Third World War against the Soviet Union, with rearmed Nazis fighting alongside the British and American forces would have already begun in 1945, if Churchill had had his way; only, as he complains, the supreme decision in the hands of President Roosevelt and Eisenhower defeated the Churchillian plan.

Pattern of History

Bit by bit, with each admission and revelation, the pieces fall into their place. The true history of the Second World War has still to be written. The policy of the double-cross in the Second World War did not begin in 1945. For the peoples the war was a war of liberation against fascism; the alliance was a genuine alliance of peoples against a common enemy. For the Western ruling class the calculations were different. Munich did not end with Munich. The alliance with the Soviet Union which could have checked Hitler's aggression and prevented the Second World War was refused. But war was declared on Hitler when he signed the non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. The 'phoney' war which followed was not merely a struggle of the rival rulers for the mastery of Europe; it was a preliminary struggle for the leadership of the anti-Soviet crusade, as Finland showed. When Hitler won this first phase and declared war on the Soviet Union, the alliance with the Soviet Union followed, but an alliance of a peculiar type. The principle was blurted out by Truman when he proclaimed the strategy that if Germany was winning, Russia should be helped, and if Russia was winning, Germany should be helped: that is, that the two powers should be encouraged to destroy one another for the benefit of the West—the principle of Munich. For three years, while the Soviet Union fought and bled and broke the Nazi armies, the Second Front was withheld by the Western powers, who, with vast armies idle, remained unengaged save with relatively small forces in secondary theatres. Only when the Nazi armies were broken by the Soviet onslaught, and the way was open for the liberation of all Europe by the strength of the Soviet armies and the popular resistance move-

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ments, the Anglo-American armies were brought into the field in Europe—as Sir Samuel Hoare, when Ambassador in Madrid, had told Franco they would be—to prevent the extension of the popular revolution over as much of Europe as possible. It was not in 1945, but in 1942, that Churchill wrote his secret memorandum on the task of stemming the advance of 'Russian barbarism' in Europe. It was in 1943 that the Anglo-American Quebec Agreement laid down the aim of the Anglo-American atom bomb monopoly, not to be disclosed to 'third parties', that is (since there was obviously no question of disclosing it to Hitler), against the Soviet Union. The present policy of rearming Nazism in a Western military alliance against the Soviet Union is not the new outcome of events of recent years. It is the culmination of a long, tenacious and complex policy which is now reaching its most critical point. It is this policy which we must—and can—now defeat.

History Does Not Repeat Itself

History never repeats itself in the same form twice; but the past often has instructive analogies for the present. There are many warning parallels between the present situation and the period of Munich and the rise of Hitler. The new Axis against the Soviet Union and Communism has been built up in the Atlantic Pact. Once again the Western powers are tearing up their war-time pledges and rearming German militarism as the supposed bulwark against Bolshevism. The aims of world domination of Hitler, thinly concealed behind the anti-communist claptrap, are reproduced in the far more blatant and openly expansionist aims of world domination of the United States. If this were the entire picture, it would point to the Third World War as plainly as the preceding signs pointed to the Second World War. Nevertheless, the differences are greater than the parallels.

Changed World Balance

In 1955 the Soviet Union no longer stands alone as in 1938. China is free. People's Democracies have replaced the fascist régimes in Eastern Europe. All Asia opposes the war plans. The majority of the working class in Western Europe, in France, in Western Germany, in Britain and in Italy is opposed to Nazi rearmament, and would revolt against a war on socialism. Hence the war planners in Washington, Fontainebleau, London and Bonn are having to make their plans against the resistance of the majority of man-

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kind. Even the spurious figures of United Nations votes reveal this changed balance. When the United States mobilised the machine on the issue of its spies sentenced in China to record a resounding vote of 49 to 5, with 7 abstentions, no newspaper ventured to record that the 12 who refused to follow the United States orders, together with China, wrongfully excluded, represented 1,300 million human beings, or the majority of mankind. People in the end decide, above all in war. The Atlantic Coalition is a minority coalition, based on a dissident working class and an insurgent colonial population, in addition to the deep divergences of interests between its imperialist rulers. The Soviet Union is approaching three times the strength of the Soviet Union of 1940 that faced and smashed Hitler. Korea and Vietnam have demonstrated the weaknesses of the imperialist coalition in war, even against small Asiatic nations, with the Soviet Union uncommitted and only Chinese volunteers engaged in Korea. There can be no question that if the Atlantic leaders were to be mad enough to unloose a Third World War, they would only be courting the doom of Hitler.

Must the World be Turned into Two Armed Camps?

The present Western rulers are sufficiently aware of this situation to hesitate before the gamble of a Third World War. Some of the wilder, though powerfully placed, elements among them openly clamour for such a course, for what they call a 'preventive war', 'drop the bomb now', 'get it over', etc. But this is not the official policy. This is not yet the main immediate menace, even though the wilder elements could get out of hand, if positive steps for peace are not taken. The extreme urgent gravity and menace of the present situation lies in the fact that the Western rulers are taking steps which, if unchecked, and whatever the intentions of their sponsors, could only lead in the end inevitably to a Third World War. The entire official Western policy is based on the conception of the division of Germany, Europe and the world into two armed camps, confronting one another and arming against one another. This, they declare, is the path to peace, 'peace through strength'—the deadly formula that has prepared every war.

The Path to War

First, they demand, there must be carried through the ratification of the London and Paris Agreements to rearm Nazi militarism in Western Germany and tie up this rearmed Western Germany in a

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Western military alliance (the tie-up may prove less secure than they imagine, once the rearmament is through). Then, and only after this, 'negotiation'—after the subject of negotiation (a united democratic peaceful Germany, not committed to any military bloc) has been destroyed. For the sake of this objective they oppose every proposal for a united peaceful settlement. The Soviet Union proposes a united democratic Germany (with free elections on the Eden formula, if desired), provided it is not tied to any military bloc. Refused. The Soviet Union proposes a united collective security treaty for all the 34 states of Europe, in place of a sectional alliance of 9 or 15. Refused. The Soviet Union proposes even to enter N.A.T.O., if it is purely defensive, as alleged, to make it a genuine collective defensive alliance. Refused. The first cardinal principle and axiom, publicly proclaimed, of Western diplomacy is that Europe must be divided into two opposing armed camps, and that this is the only path to peace. The most indifferent can see that this is the surest path to war, which can thereafter, once the sectional camps are formed and arming against one another, blaze out of the smallest incident.

A Grave Warning

The European Collective Security Conference, which met in Moscow at the end of November, was based on invitations extended equally to every state in Europe. Because the Western powers, preferring the method of sectional armed blocs, refused to participate, such smaller states (*e.g.*, Sweden) as desired to be neutral felt themselves compelled, while expressing support for the aim, to abstain. Therefore it became a sectional conference, not by the wish of those participating, but because of the Western policy for division. The Soviet Union and People's Democracies and German Democratic Republic were compelled to prepare collective measures for defence, if German militarism should be rearmed, and to prepare in that case to build up their armaments for defence. This would mean that a real arms race would begin. What has hitherto been called the 'arms race' has been a one-sided affair, of the West only, with the Atlantic powers trebling their arms expenditure in three years, while the Soviet Union and People's Democracies reduced theirs. Now, if Nazi rearmament begins, the picture will change. The arms race between two military groupings, divided only by an artificial frontier across the heart of Germany, would begin. Can anyone dare to suggest that this situation is favourable for peace? The Soviet Note of November 13 has sounded the serious warning:

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The formation of such military groupings, of some states opposed to other European states, leads inevitably, as the experience of history has shown, to the sharpening of relations between them and ultimately to war.

This is a very grave warning. The words come from men who do not use their words lightly.

Lessons of Two World Wars

All history proves the truth of this warning. What led to the First World War? The more the historians examine the evidence, the more they are convinced that no single statesman of either group planned its outbreak at the moment when it came. It arose inevitably from the division of Europe into two armed camps—the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy confronting the Triple Entente of Britain, France and Russia. The immediate occasion was only secondary. Between the two camps the arms race soared yearly higher. Some even began to argue that the arms race was the substitute for war, and that the confrontation of two armed coalitions was the guarantee of peace. On the contrary, it was the guarantee of war. Austria sought to deal with Serbia. Russia stood by Serbia, since the weakening of Serbia would have changed the whole balance in the Balkans. Germany stood by Austria. France stood by Russia. Britain stood by France. The whole machinery of sectional alliances clanked into action, and world war followed. The statesmen, in Lloyd George's phrase, 'stumbled into war'. In the preparation of the Second World War the formation and advancing aggression of the Axis military alliance of Hitler was only made possible because the Western statesmen, in their blind anti-Soviet and anti-communist hatred, permitted and assisted Nazi rearmament and fostered and encouraged Nazi aggression. The present Western policy is combining the worst of the features which preceded both world wars (the division of Europe into sectional military coalitions, *plus* Nazi rearmament) along the road which, if continued, could only lead to a Third World War.

The Time to Fight is Now

We must fight to reverse this fatal course before it is too late. The decisive hour of the fight is now—not after Nazi rearmament, but before Nazi rearmament, while there is still time to stop it. The heart of this fight is here in Britain. The majority parties of the organised working class in Western Germany, in France, in Italy are opposed to Nazi rearmament, are officially opposed to the Lon-

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don and Paris Agreements. Only in the British Labour movement has the front been broken—by a trick, by a fraudulent vote. It was bad enough when British Labour acquiesced in the Chamberlain policy of 'non-intervention' and Munich and permitting Hitler's rearmament. Must we now reach a stage when the strength of British Labour is used to *impose* Nazi rearmament on an unwilling German working class? Transport House seeking to browbeat and bully West German Social Democracy in the interests of Adenauer, Krupp and the Nazi generals! Could degradation go deeper? The majority of the British working class is as opposed to Nazi rearmament as their comrades over the water. Scarborough proved that. A minority mandated vote was officially recorded as a majority. Only a minority of the Parliamentary Labour Party accepted the Nine Power Agreements (124 out of 294). Only a minority of the British Parliament ratified them (260 out of 625—in any other parliament, as in France or West Germany, this would not have counted as a constitutional ratification). The official policy of abstention was adopted to conceal the otherwise inevitable exposure that only a minority would have voted for ratification; with the result that the only officially recorded Labour votes on this central issue before the nation were six to one against ratification! Had the 72 who voted in the party meeting against ratification, or the 82 who voted for the amendment, rallied in the lobbies, it would have been impossible to expel so large a number. The entire rank and file would have rallied to them. The urgency of the present crisis requires courage and confidence. It would be little use, after England has been reduced to a radio-active ruin, for the survivors to plead that Standing Orders made acceptance of this necessary.

Chinese Optimism

Let us conclude with some words of the Tientsin daily, *Ta Kung Pao* of November 30:

> The situation is reminiscent of 20 years ago, when Europe was also at the crossroads, with the Soviet Union fighting for collective security, and the American and British monopoly capitalist groups supporting Hitler to prepare for war.
>
> The analogy, however, is only superficial. Today not only is the Soviet Union immensely stronger than 20 years ago, but there have also appeared many people's democracies which are staunch champions of a collective security system. The Second World War and the post-war peace movement have made the peoples of the West European countries stronger and wiser. Further, there is the German Democratic Republic, a fortress of peace and

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democracy in Germany itself, and the awakening of the people in Western Germany. This means that the imitators of Hitler will be confronted with strong opposition in Germany itself.

In the East, China is no longer an oppressed country, but an independent and powerful nation capable of supporting the European peoples in their fight for peace. All this shows that whatever agreements the American ruling clique and its followers may sign and whatever schemes they may hatch, they will never achieve their purpose.

The idea of a European collective security system is sure to materialise.

There speaks the characteristic unfailing optimism of our Chinese comrades. This optimism should inspire us also in our fight. For this optimism is not based on pipe-dreams. The optimism of our Chinese comrades is drawn from a long experience of cruel and bitter struggles. It is the just—and the only justifiable—optimism that is based on the three essential foundations: first, the understanding of history; second, closeness to people and belief in people; and third, hard fighting and indomitable resolution. This last is especially necessary in Britain today.

December 14, 1954. R.P.D.

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HOW LABOUR CAN WIN

HARRY POLLITT

THE New Year of 1955 opens when the British people face an international situation far more serious than that which developed after Hitler came to power. This is the fact that needs to be grasped by every lover of peace, and particularly by the organised labour movement.

The year 1954 was characterised by a series of tremendous political events at home and abroad, and unless there is an equally great change inside the British labour movement, it will be looked back upon as the year which, under the leadership of the Tories and right-wing Labour leaders, witnessed the fateful preparations for a third world war.

There were two outstanding contradictions in Britain in 1954: first, that at a time when it was generally agreed that international tension had eased it was Britain that took the initiative in forcing through the Nine Power war agreements to re-arm Germany. Second, that at a time when there had been displayed a greater militancy and struggle against capitalism by the rank and file of the Trade Unions and Labour Party, the official leadership was never so divided, never so openly flouting the feeling in the rank and file, never so openly manœuvring and threatening in order to pull the movement behind the policy of the Tories.

The supreme tragedy of all this lies in the fact that in 1954 Labour had it within its grasp to become the real driving political force in Britain fighting for the improvement of the conditions of workers of all ages. Above all, it should have come forward as the unshakeable opponent of German rearmament and thus placed the Labour Party in an unassailable position to win the General Election as the Party of peace at whatever time it comes.

What is the internal position of the Parliamentary Labour Party? It is important to understand this, for in the last analysis it is this body and not the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party that appears as the Labour Party in British politics. The leaders turn their noses up at any decisions they do not like which may have been made by a National Conference of the Labour Party. Despite the fight made by the Lefts inside the Parliamentary Labour Party to get a front bench leadership more truly representative of

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the views of the rank and file, the Front Bench elected up to now has been reactionary, because so many Labour Members of Parliament repudiate the expressed views of their Trade Union or Constituency Labour Party.

This leadership, as typified by Attlee, Morrison and Gaitskell, is the most reactionary and conservative in the history of the British Labour Party. It maintains no daily consistent fight against all phases of Tory policy, and on all fundamental questions lines up with the Tory Government against the wishes of its rank and file, notably on German rearmament, subservience to the U.S.A., the terror in the British colonies, the continuation of the cold war and hostility to the socialist nations of the world. The withdrawal of the whip from the Labour M.P.'s who saved the honour of the Labour Party by their stand against German rearmament; the closing down of *Socialist Outlook;* the threats constantly being made against *The Tribune;* and the expulsion of some of the finest members the Labour Party ever possessed for associating with Communists in striving for peace, are indications of how far the right-wing Labour leaders are prepared to go in their efforts to support the Tory Government's preparations for war.

The policy of the right-wing leaders has resulted in presenting to the people a Parliamentary Labour Party which is divided on the most urgent political issue of the day—peace or war—and this at a time when the maximum unity could have been obtained if the mass opposition to German rearmament on the part of the rank and file of the Labour Movement had been faithfully reflected by these leaders. Furthermore, it has led to feelings of frustration among Labour Members of Parliament that have nothing in common with the magnificent will to fight the Tories expressed in so many directions during 1954, nor anything in common with any serious intention of winning political power at the next General Election.

But the Left and Centre elements in the Parliamentary Labour Party have also to take a measure of responsibility because in all too many cases they have made no consistent and effective appeals for support either to the people who elected them, or to the Constituency Labour Parties and Trade Unions to which they belong. If this had been done, their fight would have been certain of success. If all those Labour Members of Parliament who are opposed to German rearmament had voted against it, the Attlees and Morrisons would never have dared to propose their exclusion from the Labour Party. The rank and file would never have allowed it to take place.

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A special responsibility now rests particularly on those Labour Members of Parliament who proclaim their opposition to the policy of the right-wing leaders. It is to try and find the basis of a common policy which can be placed fairly and squarely before the rank and file.

Groups of M.P.'s have in the past issued policy statements such as 'Keep Left'. How much more important it is today to put forward a policy which can command the support of the widest progressive section of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and which would receive the overwhelming majority support of the workers in the constituencies, the factories and the streets. Furthermore, experience in these last few years has also proved beyond a shadow of doubt, that when some critics of the right-wing Labour leaders think it good policy to go out of their way constantly to proclaim they have no association with the Communist Party, or talk and write about 'Communism and Fascism' in the same terms, they are not placing a protective shield around themselves from being attacked by the right-wing Labour leaders, but playing into the hands of those leaders to disrupt the Left. For it does not prevent the right-wing Labour leaders and Tories using the term 'Bevanite' in the same way as they use the term 'Communist' to try to discredit all in the labour movement who want to work for a policy that is based on the principles of Socialism.

The rank and file have proved in a hundred and one ways during 1954 their hatred of the Tories, and their readiness to make great sacrifices during strikes to fight them. They have shown that they do not want another war, but do want socialism and are ready to work side by side with all the sections of the labour movement who have similar aims. This magnificent fighting spirit has brought about a certain differentiation in the Parliamentary Labour Party and on the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party which it is vital should be developed to the point where the policy of the right-wing leaders can be defeated.

The whole situation, therefore, calls for the most immediate and objective examination by every serious minded person in the labour movement of what needs to be done to make absolutely certain that at the General Election the Tories can be decisively defeated. Millions of such persons exist; they are to be found in every factory, pit, shipyard, workshop, field, office, school and laboratory. They have no axe to grind, no thoughts of personal advancement or career. The present and future interests of the movement and the coming to

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fruition of its noble aims are their everlasting desire and aim. They are the flower of the British people, its hope and inspiration. They deserve something better than they are getting today from the Attlees, Morrisons and Gaitskells.

If ever time was the essence of the contract, this is the case today. In our judgment 1955 can be the decisive year in all Britain's history. It can be a year of peaceful social advance, or one in which further steps are taken towards the physical destruction of these islands and its people through another world war.

No one can tell what the mad warmongers temporarily in power in the United States of America and Britain will get up to, if through any weakness in the labour movement the Tories are returned to power at the next General Election. A Churchill representing imperialism at its vilest who was prepared in May, 1945, to use Nazi troops against our Russian allies at a moment when Russian soil was drenched with blood, when every Russian home was bereaved, when the fumes from Nazi gas chambers were fouling the air of Germany and Poland, is a ghoul who will not hesitate to use hydrogen bombs to crush Socialism unless he and his like are removed from power for all time.

1955 can give Labour its greatest opportunities, but only if it realises its equally great responsibility and starts now to set its house in order. No one pretends there is any easy road, any short cut, or that no one's feelings are going to be hurt. That would be deceitfully shallow thinking that needs to be pushed ruthlessly on one side. No, there is no magic way of defeating Tory or Labour reactionary leadership and policies, or of ending their defeatism or political opportunism. But there are ways of restoring confidence in the labour movement, of restoring unity, collective thought, collective leadership, and formulating policies that can evoke the enthusiastic support of every section of the organised membership of the labour movement, and the millions of its allies who look to it for political leadership.

A speedy transformation of the whole position of the Labour Party could be secured if the Left leaders and the rank and file of the Constituency Labour Parties, backed up by the local trade union branches and trades councils, would now carry through a great campaign against German rearmament, and for immediate negotiations for a collective settlement of European problems. The organisation of meetings, conferences, the lobbying of every single Member of Parliament demanding to know where they stand on this life

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and death issue is what is needed. In the case of Labour Members of Parliament refusing to oppose German rearmament, they should be repudiated and new selection conferences convened to select new candidates who will carry out the wishes of the members.

Alongside such a campaign there could be an insistent demand for a Special Conference of the Labour Party to express the will of the members for peace and against German rearmament.

The local elections in the spring now take on a special significance. They can not only be the means of defeating Tory-controlled local and County Councils, but the battleground on which every phase of Labour organisation is tightened up in readiness for any General Election which may take place.

The trade unionists should press forward, with all the strength, unity and power they possess, their demands for wage increases out of the illgotten gains of the employers, so that both on the industrial and political fields we witness the greatest mass movement Britain has ever seen.

For our part, we express the opinion that one of the most effective measures that could be taken to help in closing the ranks would be for the Labour Party to withdraw the bans it imposes upon any of its members or organisations working alongside members of the Communist Party. It is common knowledge throughout the labour movement that members of the Labour and Communist Parties are working together in spite of the bans on such activity. The proof of this is to be found in the character of the agendas for all conferences of working-class organisations and from the results of these conferences. How much greater could be these results if the bans were lifted and such united work could be done without fear of being suspended or expelled from the Labour Party.

Let members of the Labour Party ask themselves if these bans have strengthened or weakened the Labour Party. The answer is plain for all to see in the present disastrous position of the Labour Party, and the result of the recent West Derby by-election. It is a stupid position, in fact, that exists at the present time. Labour and Communist Party members work with each other in the factories, the trade union branches, trade union district and executive committees, trades councils, and in tenants' organisations, but are proscribed from doing so in local, county or parliamentary elections, or in the fight for peace and friendship between the peoples.

We are very glad when we read the speeches of certain Labour leaders supporting the idea of the peaceful co-existence of the

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capitalist and socialist systems of society. But we are a little puzzled when we know how vehemently they oppose any members of the Labour Party and Communist Party working together.

The Left leaders and the rank and file of the Labour Party need to take a firmer attitude against the operation of the existing bans on being associated with the Communist Party. This would be in the interests of the whole labour movement, because the members of the Communist Party have a record second to none in the labour movement for their ceaseless activity in the factories, trade unions and working-class localities, and unity in action with the Communists now is the best way to break through the anti-democratic bans that hold back the membership of the Labour Party from exerting their full strength.

It is time to have a change. Time to stop playing at politics, and above all, time to understand that the essence of politics is that it represents a struggle for power. Concretely in British conditions the task is to do everything possible to defeat the Tories and get a Government that will lead Britain on the road to economic prosperity for its working people, defend our national independence, and ensure that we live in peace and take the first essential steps towards Socialism.

Such a great united campaign could electrify the whole country, lead to gigantic demonstrations for peace and social advance, sweep the Tories away and lead to the return of a majority of Labour and Communist M.P.'s pledged to fight for the people. It could help forward the movement for the much needed special conference of the Labour Party and the removal of all bans on members of other working-class organisations and peace and friendship societies; and as the fight for a lasting peace and for victory at the General Election went forward so too would the demand arise that just as the leaders of nations with different social systems can meet together to discuss complicated problems, so there is a need for the leaders of all working-class organisations in Britain to be brought together.

In preparation for the General Election and for the issues which will dominate the political scene in Britain in 1955, we suggest:

1. The broadest united campaign to mobilise the people against Toryism and the war policy and for the return of a Labour majority for a progressive policy for peace and socialism.

2. Co-operation of all sections in the factory, trade union branches, local Labour Parties and all organisations of the labour movement, Communist and non-Communist, to win these aims.

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3. A special Labour Party Conference to reverse the policy of support for Toryism and German rearmament and take up leadership of the fight for peace.

4. To remove the bans on Labour Party members working alongside members of the Communist Party in support of agreed aims.

5. That an exchange of opinion should take place between leaders of the Executive Committees of the Labour Party, Co-operative Party and Communist Party to try and reach agreement on what needs to be and can be done to defeat the Tory Government.

We pledge that the Communist Party will give its unstinted support to help bring to fruition the aims we have set out.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

SOUTH AFRICA

On October 25 at a meeting of the European Associated Chambers of Commerce protests were made against the high taxation of the African on the grounds that 'he was an economic asset'. It was pointed out that Africans getting as low a wage as £12 or £18 a year were taxed, whereas a European did not pay any taxes till he was earning between £300 and £400; that Africans were liable to be arrested if they had not the receipt of their poll tax in their pockets and that farmers often had to pay their African employees' taxes and get it back afterwards from the wages (these two latter instances obviously providing reasons why the European Chamber of Commerce were agitating against this taxation).

In the middle of November a relatively huge concentration of government forces was secretly made at Durban. This concentration was given out as necessary to compel the Africans to pay their overdue poll taxes. At 3 o'clock in the morning of November 14, the barracks of the Africans were surrounded by some 500 European and 200 African police armed with tear gas bombs, bayonets and machine guns. At one barracks some protests were made, but according to the report 'slight pressure by the bayonet proved adequate persuasion' (Johannesburg *Star*, November 14)! Some 350 out of over 5,000 searched were arrested for being unable to produce their tax receipts and in being marched to the police station were watched by crowds of Africans. These, according to the same report—

> were cleared away like chaff before the wind by three tear gas bombs. The effectiveness of the new police arm was immediately demonstrated. . . .

From *The Recent Events in South Africa*, by E. R. Roux, January, 1930.

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MAKING THE POOR KEEP THE POOR

KATHERINE HOOD

BY raising pensions and other insurance benefits to 40s. a week for a single person and 65s. a week for a married couple, the Government is roughly bringing them back in terms of present-day prices to their 1946 level. This is nothing to boast about. Like Alice through the Looking Glass, by running as fast as we can we have managed to stay in the same place. And what sort of a place is it? As in 1946, the pensions are not enough by themselves to live on; they are below even the low subsistence level recommended by the Beveridge Report, and far below that operated by the National Assistance Board. As in 1946, those without any other resources will be obliged to apply to the Assistance Board for supplementary payments to bring them up to Assistance Board level after a Means Test. This level is now to be raised to 37s. 6d. plus rent allowance for a single person, 63s. plus rent allowance for a married couple. Thus all those pensioners and chronic sick who pay more than 2s. 6d. on rent will stay on a Means Test. Moreover, the increase in the Assistance Board's scales is much less than the rise in benefits—it amounts to only 2s. 6d. for a single person and 4s. for a married couple. The $2\frac{1}{2}$ million persons now on a Means Test (which includes over one million on Retirement Pension) will get no more than these sums, for if their benefits rise their supplementary payments will be cut. In short, the Government's proposals give least to the poorest.

The major part of the cost of the increased benefits will be shouldered in the next few years by the insured person and employer —only a small part of the initial burden will be carried by the Exchequer. And though the Exchequer's contribution will rise over the next five years, it will continue to form a smaller percentage of the total than was originally planned in 1946. The increase in contributions of 1s. a week for all adults and 6d. a week for youngsters means £1 million a week less purchasing power in wage earners' pay packets—a serious matter for the lower paid workers. Thus are the poor being made to finance the poorest.

The fact must be faced that Transport House bears a heavy responsibility for these measures. The Old Age Pensioners' Association has been campaigning for a modest minimum pension of £2 10s.

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a week; early in the year the Communist Party made an unanswerable case for £3.* But in its programme 'Challenge to Britain' the Labour Party launched instead its glittering slogan 'Back to 1946'. This bold stroke was followed by another from the T.U.C.—a resolution agreeing to an increase in workers' contributions. It is true that the General Council have qualified their stand in this respect—they think the Exchequer's contribution should go up a little more, so that the workers' contribution could go up a little less. The fact remains that it is not really the T.U.C.'s job to campaign for an all-round wage cut, however small, and the indignation of the miners on this question is likely to be paralleled throughout industry.

Simultaneously with the announcement of new benefit rates has come the Report of the Phillips Committee advocating the most vicious of all economy measures—the raising of the minimum retirement age to 68 for men and 63 for women. The Government had pinned all their hopes on this Committee which (with the notable exception of its two trade union representatives) has made just the recommendations required of it. Fortunately for all of us, the Committee's evidence fails to support its recommendations. Indeed, in the course of a clumsily argued case, it manages to destroy its two main props; these are the 'ageing population' cult and the 'actuarial' cult.

The 'ageing population' cult has been with us ever since Beveridge and perhaps a bit before. Its basis is the argument that in 10, 25, 30 or maybe 75 years hence (the number doesn't really matter) there will be so many old people in the country that the population of working age will be crushed beneath the immense burden of trying to maintain them. Therefore the old must go to work too.

Every now and again the population experts are proved wrong and a drastic revision of forecasts takes place. For instance in 1942 it was estimated that there would be 9.6 million persons over pension age by 1971. But it is now stated that that total will not even be reached by 1979. In the same way, the rise in the birth-rate after the war threw every previous forecast out of gear. Quite undeterred by these stresses and strains the authorities seized on the ageing population cult for their own purposes and gave it official backing. The Ministry of Labour even issued leaflets illustrating the sweated workers of the future pushing along a lot of old people in a cart.

*Memorandum on National Insurance presented to the Ministry of National Insurance, published by the Communist Party, price 9d.

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Miners in the Rhondda: by Ern Brooks

Cup before the bath

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Engine Winder

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The Phillips Committee have now been forced to explode this theory. The answer is a very simple one. Though the proportion of old people will rise, the proportion of children will fall. So that if present trends continue there will be roughly the same number of workers for each dependant as there were before. Here are the figures:

Percentage Distribution of the Population

	Children 0-14	*Active Age-groups* *Men* 15-64. *Women* 15-59	*Elderly*: *Men* 65 *and over*. *Women* 60 *and over*
1954 ...	22	64	14
1964 ...	21	64	15
1979 ...	20	62	18

The Committee does not dare try to argue that an old person consumes more goods and services than a child. The result is that the main argument for making people work longer falls to the ground. The standard of living which we provide for young or old depends on how much is produced, and how what is produced is distributed *at any given time*. At present sufficient is produced to give old age pensioners a much better standard than they now enjoy.

Mr. Butler thinks that in 25 years' time the National Income will be double what it is today. This would mean that the future sums needed for old age pensioners which now appear large if taken in isolation, would appear relatively small when the time comes. Not everyone has Mr. Butler's faith in the future of capitalism, but at least the capitalists cannot argue it both ways.

The Phillips Committee is reluctantly forced to admit that 'To anyone viewing the matter exclusively in terms of the balance between producers and consumers, workers and dependants, there might seem little cause for uneasiness' (para. 104). It therefore falls back on the *financial* problem of how to transfer the necessary purchasing power to the old. This leads us to the second main prop —the 'actuarial' cult. It needs some explanation.

The orthodox theory of a private insurance scheme is that the individual puts money aside during his working life which is invested at compound interest; the capital assets thus created, and therefore the enhancement of productive power, make it possible to guarantee a return from this investment in the form of an income much later on. Like a flower planted in early Spring it blooms in the Autumn of our life. It may here be mentioned in passing that even in a private pension scheme this theory does not stand up for two reasons; firstly, because the amount produced at any given time

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depends not only on the capital equipment but on the use made of it—*i.e.*, on *people;* secondly, because a large part of the investment carried out by Insurance Companies does not enhance productive power at all—much of it is invested for instance in old house property.

The contributions paid weekly into the National Insurance Fund via the insurance card by employer, employee and exchequer, are worked out on exactly the same assumptions as those above. What goes into the Fund via the insurance card is known as the 'actuarial contribution'—somewhat over the weekly sum needed to provide a contributor from the age of 16 onwards with the necessary benefits *assuming that sum is invested at compound interest.* But here all resemblance to a private insurance scheme ends. The sums are not invested; the greater part of them are paid out immediately in current benefits to old age pensioners and others who could not come into the scheme at 16 because none such existed. The flowers never bloom; and have nothing to do with the case. And the Committee is forced to admit that in spite of all the elaborate calculations of the Government Actuary the controversy as to whether or not the scheme is 'actuarially sound', the scares about 'actuarial deficits', 'uncovered liabilities' and the like, the scheme is not an insurance scheme at all—it is simply a method of taking money currently out of one pocket and putting it into another. Why then retain the fiction? Why continue with insurance contributions at all? Why not finance it directly out of taxation graded according to ability to pay? The Committee makes it quite clear why not:

> We think that contributions provide an important measure of social discipline since everyone is aware that higher rates of pension must at once be accompanied by higher contributions. The existence of an accepted actuarial basis is a useful safeguard when rates of benefits are under consideration; it imposes some check on reckless increases (para. 167).

Meanwhile the T.U.C. General Council, who are great devotees of the actuarial cult, tangling themselves up in all directions, have this year once more re-affirmed their support for a contributory system on the grounds that it offers 'the best guarantee of a subsistence minimum paid as of right without means test'. Since when?

Having destroyed its two main props the Committee falls back on its only real argument for raising pension ages—the 'strains' on the Budget not only today but, in particular, tomorrow. If things go on as they are, it is prophesied, we may well be faced in 25 years' time with an annual expenditure of £1,000 million a year on pen-

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sions alone. This is a good deal less than the amount being spent annually on rearmament at the present time. Allowing for all the 'imponderables' such as likely changes in the value of money and changes in productivity, it can be viewed with complete equanimity. And how much does the Committee expect to save out of this sum by its proposals? Not more than £50 million net a year 25 years hence.

Why so little? Because six out of ten old age pensioners do in practice continue working after the minimum pension age. Because three-quarters of those who do not, either retire because they are ill, in which case they can claim sickness benefit, or get the sack, in which case they could claim unemployment benefit. The Committee has indeed laboured and produced a mouse.

It is doubtful whether the Government will dare introduce legislation to raise the age before the election, much as they might like to. Not because they have any scruples about imposing this cruellest economy cut of all, but quite simply from fear of the Labour movement, who are far from prepared to throw away everything which they fought for and won in the past. All credit must go to the two trade union representatives on the Phillips Committee who in an admirable Minority Report spoke up for the millions they represent, not only refusing to accept an increase in retirement ages, but suggesting that there might well be a case for reducing the age in the more arduous occupations. And all credit must go too to those who, in the teeth of opposition from the General Council at this year's T.U.C., stuck to their guns and fought through a resolution asserting the right of all citizens to expect to retire not later than 65 years of age. On this issue at least the movement stands solid. So long as this is so what government will dare to take up the challenge?

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MY SIX HUNDRED MILLION FRIENDS

JOHN HORNER

THE Americans had boarded the 'plane at Prague. Along with my companions, I had quietly speculated on their mission. The front one, I argued, tall, grey, distinguished, was a diplomat. The fellow behind, lantern jawed, was my idea of a diplomat's bodyguard. And now the grey one had introduced himself to the Labour M.P. on the other side of the gangway.

'Congressman Fisher from Texas and this is Congressman . . . ' (I missed the name) 'from Alabama.'

'What did he say? Was it Battle?'

'Not Battle of the Battle Act?'

'The same, Sir. Pleased to meet you.'

Pleased to meet us! Were we pleased to meet him? Three hours to Moscow and Congressman Battle all to ourselves! Ten M.P.'s, four General Secretaries, Right and Left Wing, Bevanites—'And this, Mr. Battle, is our only Communist.'

'Tell me, Sir—you're the first Communist I have met—is the Communist Party in Britain trying to overthrow the British Government with force and violence like our American Communist Party?'

They told us their story. With a blare of accompanying publicity they had applied in Washington for visas for the Soviet Union, expecting a blunt refusal. The rejection would then be trumpeted, and the Soviet Union confirmed as keeping its Iron Curtain. Mr. Battle continued, 'But you see we got our visas—and then we had no choice, we had to come.'

I heard from Mr. Battle how Congressmen and their supporters in Texas, Alabama and Mississippi view the world scene. 'Europe must be free from Soviet domination! American bases from Iceland to Japan were only put there when the Soviet Union began to expand!' I said, 'Suppose China had a base on Long Island from which it was bombing the mainland and interfering with American shipping? Suppose Soviet atom bombers were in Mexico, the Caribbeans and the Azores?' 'Waal', he replied, 'of course, that's different.' He asked questions about the Soviet Union. I told him about my visit to Uzbekistan two years ago. 'Yes', he said, 'I was a member of the Congress delegation to Pakistan.' I repeated 'Uzbekistan' and he went on to tell me of his visit to Pakistan. I gave up. He claimed that the Battle Act was far more 'liberal' than

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the legislation it had replaced. When we parted I had just one single moment's terror at the thought of such immense power in the hands of such arrogant, ignorant men. 'China', he had declared, 'must be freed from Soviet domination—the Chinese people do not want the Soviets.' We were to find out what the Chinese people thought about the 'Soviets'. For we were China bound.

The old city of Peking in the autumn—warm sunny days and the bluest of blue skies. On the Dutch airliner out I had read in *Country Life* that until the coming of the Communists the Chinese had the deepest respect for their ancient culture and their lovely old buildings. The real fact is that until the Peoples' Government, the magnificent temples, the superb palaces, the Imperial City, all the buildings which gave Peking the name of the City of Northern Peace—were quietly but steadily falling to pieces. It has been left to the People's Government, with loving care, to restore and preserve these wonderful monuments of Chinese culture. No country cherishes its treasures as does China. (We had a Cambridge Professor who found that without very special authority he could not take any book more than 80 years old out of China.)

But along with the draining of the old Imperial Lakes, the cleaning of the Dragon Ditch, the restoration of the Palaces and Temples, there is at the same time an immense amount of new building going on apace in this ancient city. New hospitals—there was a brand new Eye Hospital opposite our hotel. New housing estates, roads, municipal buildings, universities. And the people! There are a lot of Chinese in China—over six hundred million of them. No city is so alive as Peking. We were treading in Mr. Attlee's footsteps. Back in England he had said that China had a 'population problem', that 'China was going in for quantity and not quality.' For my part I have never seen such children. Perhaps it's their comical hair cuts, their fat faces, dark eyes, their lovely teeth and funny little trousers coupled with their completely uninhibited friendliness. I spent my last afternoon in Peking sitting in the sun in the Bai Pai Park, the old Dowager Empress's Winter Palace. The place was alive with strings of singing, laughing children weaving in and out of the old pine trees. Mr. Attlee, I believe, calls himself a Christian. When he made that remark 'quantity and not quality' about Chinese children he never uttered a less Christian word.

We were to travel four thousand miles in China before we saw Peking again. We went to the Yung Ling Mountains in the far South-West. We flew three hundred miles across the Yangtse floods. One evening under a darkening sky I sat on a dyke looking across

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a boundless expanse of water. From my companion I heard the story of the last Yangtse floods, when in 1931 three million people died of starvation. From the same man I heard of the great battle this year when the industrial cities of the Middle Yangtse were saved by a dyke on which three hundred thousand people worked night and day. This time no one went hungry. In the mountains we had seen irrigation works built three hundred years before Christ. Neglected for centuries, they were being redeveloped by the People's Government leading tens of thousands of peasants in co-operation. The age-old problem of China's rivers—China's sorrows, had at last been solved by people working together in a way never before witnessed on this earth.

We had been to villages. Peasants had gathered round telling us of land reform, had spoken of the bad old days. The Vice-Chairman of one village was a woman. The Chairman, taking her case as an example, told us of the sufferings of her family under the decadent brutal feudalism of the landlord system in China which came to an end no more than five years ago. As the woman's story was being translated I looked across. Tears were running down her cheeks as old memories were revived. When these peasants say 'Under the leadership of the Communist Party and Chairman Leader Mao we have done this or that', they really mean what they say.

In Chungking we visited a Steel Works. It seemed pretty poor stuff to me. Everywhere the Chinese declared—'If you have any criticisms please let us have them', 'we would like your advice' and so on. We had two experts on steel who took the invitation to criticise seriously. In a most helpful and friendly way they told the Director what they thought of this works. When it came to a certain technical aspect of steel production I lost the thread of the discussion. One of our experts promised to send a book on this particular matter. The Director was duly grateful. An M.P. asserted that no such book would be permitted through the Battle embargo. Somehow or other I thought that the whole argument about steel production and the text book was a little unreal. Three weeks later we were to learn just how unreal it all was. We went to An Shan, the Chinese Sheffield. A vast mill turning out galvanised steel sheeting like paper through a duplicator. Said the Director, 'We wanted to buy galvanised steel from Britain. We were forbidden. So the Soviet Union gave us this plant.' White-hot seamless spun steel tubes coming out like macaroni. Men sitting in glass-fronted boxes pushing buttons in the automatic plants. We argued whether they were as good as the Margam Works in South Wales.

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And all built in the last three years. Their foundations laid while MacArthur was bombing the Yalu River 20 minutes' flying time away. The Chinese people had no doubts about the outcome of the Korean war! Ruefully my friend from the Chungking talk said 'I won't send the book now, they wouldn't pay the postage.'

When I was in the Merchant Navy I learnt about Shanghai—about its squalor and its luxury. Squalor unparalleled. A luxury built upon the exploitation of the Chinese people whose wealth drained to the West through the great funnel which was Shanghai. We went to the notorious 'alleys'. Hundreds of acres of what were once the worst slums in the world. We met the Women's Committee in this part of the alleys—fine, dignified, intelligent people. They told us of their work. The literacy classes they ran for women, their ante-natal care and new methods of midwifery, their adjudication in the inevitable human conflicts which arise in such overcrowded conditions. Here were men and women 'under the leadership (yes, they said it once again) of the Communist Party and Chairman Mao' by their own efforts who had raised themselves from the slough which had for generations been a byword of degradation. And we saw the new estates, the new towns of Shanghai.

At a party given by the Consul General we met the remnants of the British business community. Many of them were forceful men eager to do business with the New China. Others seemed remnants of the past left on the beach at ebb tide. Once in the heart of this great overcrowded city they had their immense race-course. Now, they complained, it is a public park. Their splendid pavilion is now a Museum of Culture. Their magnificent International Club has been taken over by the Trade Unions. The world famous Long Bar went out with Chiang Kai-shek. 'Had we seen any corpses in the streets?' and, 'Yes, the Chinese children were nice but they are trained by this Government to be pleasant with foreigners!' On the other hand the ex-deputy Chief of Police in Shanghai, now in shipping, a big loud-spoken man, told us that seven ships in the last few days had come into the river from Europe. But not one British ship bringing British goods! He wanted to know what the M.P.'s were going to do about that? He had no false ideas about New China's capacity to trade or the importance of China to Britain.

But from the ignorance and prejudice of some of these people I fled to spend the afternoon with the Shanghai firemen. Here I suffered my only insult in China (except when at the farewell dinner a distinguished academic gentleman sitting next to me said 'I think now you have reached the stage, Mr. Horner, when you should

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abandon the chop sticks and revert to knife and fork'). After a splendid time with the firemen in their mess room, late for my next appointment, I went to the pole hole doors to slide down the pole. I was immediately restrained—'You are our guest, Mr. Horner, we must take care of you.' Politeness broke down—down the pole I went and we had a game of follow my leader with 50 Chinese firemen chasing me down the poles to the appliance room floor. A great afternoon.

At some famous Textile Mills in Tientsin, we met the Managing Director, the only man in China wearing a well-cut Western tweed suit. When we walked into his office I noticed that everything had a small tag on it—pictures, clocks, desks and all. Jokingly I said to him 'Are they selling you up?' 'Not at all', he said, 'we and the State are going into joint ownership—this is an inventory.' And then this Managing Director told us of the financial and administrative changes that would take place in these mills when the State moved in alongside the capitalist shareholders. He explained how under capitalism the contradictions of the class struggle prevented the full development of the nation's economic strength. He spoke about the conflict between capitalism and Labour in his own factories and how that conflict would be partially removed by joint ownership which was merely a transitional stage to Socialism. When we came away the M.P. from Lancashire asked me whether I thought the Managing Director was sincere in his exposition of the class struggle. I said that I thought it irrelevant, but wouldn't he like to hear some of his Lancashire Directors talking like that. Sadly he shook his head. There was obviously too much class struggle for him altogether.

Napoleon, speaking of China, said 'Let this giant sleep.' But he was thinking in military terms. Now this giant is awake. But not for war. For Peace.

With the Soviet Union, China will go on building Socialism. Opposed to this New World, outside of it, there is no future for Britain except one of increasing tutelage to America with its attendant economic threat, its cold war. In association with this New World Britain can regain its independence, build its economy anew on firm Socialist lines, help in maintaining World Peace. Perhaps China is the most exciting, stimulating country today. But its challenge to our Movement, to those Labour M.P.'s who were with me in the 'plane, is to free Britain from the toils of Mr. Battle and his infamous Act, from all that his friends and their Chiang Kai-sheks stand for. That's the first job. To start with we might have dropped Mr. Battle from the 'plane!

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EMPIRE PREMIERS MEET

IDRIS COX

COMMONWEALTH Prime Ministers meet again in London this month. The main topics for discussion are the unsolved problems from the last meeting—and some new ones! The effect of G.A.T.T. (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) is again up for review; and convertibility of sterling is still a thorny question. But main attention will be given to military problems, and especially to the new situation in Asia after the Geneva peace settlement on Indo-China and the commitments made under S.E.A.T.O. (South-East Asia Treaty Organisation); and the new links in the Middle East after the signing of the agreement on the Suez Canal zone. The title 'Commonwealth' sounds democratic and gives the impression of being all-embracing. It does not include the colonies, though it is from the exploitation of the 80 million people under direct colonial rule that the bulk of the sterling balances in the British banks comes.

Though confined to Dominion Premiers the gathering is not exactly a happy family. Apart from their common problems arising from increasing United States penetration and their commitments to its war plans, each of them has special problems as well as serious differences with one another.

Last May the Menzies Government of Australia scraped through the General Election with a small majority of seats, but a minority of the total votes cast. Even this narrow escape was achieved only by launching the Petrov frame-up just before the election, as did the Tories in Britain in 1924 with the Zinoviev letter. After Dr. Evatt's trenchant exposure this Menzies plot has recoiled upon the author's own head, and has severely shaken his political standing.

Canada's trade with the U.S.A. is expanding—at the expense of Britain. Far from strengthening Canada's position the effect is to distort her whole economy. This year unemployment reached the peak figure of 580,000. And as yet there is no sign that Canada's ruling class intend any drastic steps to resist growing U.S. domination. More than likely, Canada's Premier will urge the London Conference to make changes to suit the United States, particularly in regard to G.A.T.T. and the convertibility of sterling.

However, the biggest political headache for the Dominion Premiers comes from the growing estrangement of India, over the slavish adherence by Britain and most of the Dominions to the

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United States war plans in Asia. Britain is a member of S.E.A.T.O. and so are the 'white' Dominions. India and Ceylon are not members. Pandit Nehru has openly condemned this new threat to the Asian countries. At the same time, the deadlock between India and Pakistan over Kashmir still remains. Nehru has expressed serious concern about the attacks on the status of Indians in Ceylon. India's relations with the Malan (now Strydom) white supremacy régime in South Africa are extremely strained.

Pakistan reels from one crisis to another. The majority of the people are against the present régime, and neither United States 'aid' nor the repressive measures of Ghulam Mohammed, the governor-general, have been able to create stability. Nor is the position much better in Ceylon. Faced with the growing United Front movement and the rising militancy of the trade unions, Sir John Kotelawala, Prime Minister, makes a prolonged visit to Britain and the U.S.A. to appeal for 'economic aid'.

All in all, the 'Commonwealth' meeting of Dominion Premiers will not serve to solve the serious and urgent problems confronting the peoples of the Empire. It can be expected to turn a blind eye to the pressing demands of the millions of colonial peoples and to adopt more ruthless measures for their exploitation and suppression; and to remain silent on the grave issues of the wars in Malaya and Kenya. It is unlikely to take any effective measures against the biggest menace to all the countries of the Empire—the aggressive measures of United States imperialism. It is United States penetration which weakens the trading relations between the Empire countries, undermines their position in the export markets, and imposes upon them ever-increasing burdens of military expenditure —the inevitable concomitant to their co-operation with the U.S.A. in its war plans.

The alternative to this disastrous policy is for the peoples of the Empire to unite in a firm alliance to achieve their national independence. This calls for firm resistance to United States domination, the expansion of trading relations within the Empire countries for their mutual benefit, and friendly trading relations with all countries. Its achievement will depend on the strength and success of the growing popular movement to end the exploitation and murder of colonial peoples (most brutally expressed in Malaya and Kenya) and win full support to their demand for freedom and national independence.

Above all, it depends on united opposition to the reactionary war alliance with the United States rulers and the crippling arms pro-

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gramme which impose heavy burdens and lower living standards on the peoples of the Empire. In this respect the united fight of the peoples of the Empire is inseparable from the common struggle of all peoples to maintain world peace and advance on the road to freedom and democracy.

COLOUR-BARRED

A NIGERIAN IN YORKSHIRE

[*In view of the current discussion on the colour bar, the following account is of special interest—above all to trade unionists—as showing the experiences of discrimination against coloured workers in Britain and what they think about it. For obvious reasons we withhold the name of our correspondent and certain details to protect his anonymity; but apart from these we print the document as we received it.—Ed., L.M.*]

WE suffer so many sorts of discrimination in housing accommodation. There is no landlady or landlord who takes us in because of sympathy or liking, only because of our money. Where the white man pays £1 for a room the coloured man is charged £2 or more. Some landlords and landladies don't like to take white men simply because they want to make money out of the coloured man.

If any coloured man goes to the Rent Tribunal because of high rent, he has no hope that the tribunal will take any notice. And if the landlady or landlord knows about it he will be given notice as soon as possible. If you have a wireless or radiogram the landlady will charge you extra. I know a friend who pays £2 for an empty room and 15s. for his radiogram for three months. When the electric light bill comes the landlady will make the boys in the house share it.

If we go out looking for a room the whole street will be gazing at us and staring at us. Some will even insult us, calling us all sorts of names which they think are funny enough to laugh at. If you knock and the door opens for you, when they see that you are coloured, they bang the door and run inside saying 'a nigger'. Some will laugh and simply shut the door. There is a certain segregation in this city. If you ask for a room they will tell you 'we don't take coloured men. Go to number so and so, she takes coloured men'. Seeing this difficulty we agree to pay £2 a week or more for an empty room.

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In some houses there are seven men in one room paying £1 each or more. Our landlord puts seven men in an attic. It happened one day that one of them had trouble with the landlady. All the boys went out and when they came back in the midnight they found all their belongings outside the house on the street. It was raining and everything got damaged. They slept in the rain. They went to the tribunal, but the tribunal did not do a thing.

I phoned one landlady who advertised in the paper. She told me to come and have the room but when I got there with my belongings she said 'I didn't know you were coloured. I am sorry, I can't give it to you because you are black'. One asked me one day what nationality I was on the telephone. I said 'a Nigerian'. She asked 'Have you had trouble with the police before?' I said 'No'. 'Do you have anyone to recommend you?' I said 'Yes'. But still she refused to take me in.

Some of us who get money to buy a house will go to an Estate Agent or lawyers. They will ask then what are you buying it for, yourself to stay or for renting it out for your coloured men. If you answer that for renting and yourself to stay, they will not let you buy it.

The job you get sent after by the Ministry of Labour is the worst job or a job which the white man doesn't want to do. Sometimes they tell us that there is no job at all for us. In some factories where there are vacancies they will advise the Labour Exchange that coloured men are not wanted. Another will take you because he will pay you less wages. If he is paying a white man £7 the coloured man doing the same job with him will be paid less. This applies in two very well-known factories here and in several others. When they pay bonus and tonnage we are not paid.

In some factories the workers don't want to work with coloured men (*our correspondent here names a huge engineering factory.—Ed., L.M.*). Some of the workers will come and assault you or insult you. If you report to the manager he will not do anything. I was sent by the Labour Exchange to a railway goods house. The manager took me and told me to see the foreman to fix me a job. When I got to the foreman he told me that there is no job for me. In another firm here (*also named.—Ed., L.M.*) a job that is done by three or more persons is given to one coloured man to do.

In factories we can get the sack easily. If you defend yourself against any man who assaults you, when the manager comes the coloured man will be sacked, but the white will stay.

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I was told in the Labour Office that no coloured man is wanted in the pits here. No training works for me. We have written so many applications to the Minister of Labour for the training job. He told us that we are not fit enough.

In the Assistance Board and the Labour Exchange they will make remarks like 'Why don't you go back home; this is not your country'. Some shops and stores they even charge us more money for the things we buy. Some will try to give you incorrect change. They think we can't count money.

We have been beaten up by groups of white men here in X several times. In dance halls a group of white men beat up a boy because of one girl who said he is better than you English. When the police came, instead of settling the matter they started beating the boy. When the coloured men saw this they joined in the fight and the policemen took all the coloured boys into custody. They left the white men free and the boys were fined £2 to £16 each. The police here in X give us brutal treatment. If a coloured man is drunk he is fined over £10 by the magistrate, but for the white man 10s.

You might not believe all this but if you see it with your eyes you will believe.

We are told to bring our own girls to dancing halls before we could be allowed in.

In picture houses they even try to segregate us but we get rid of it and stop it. In some dance halls and public houses we are banned not to enter. If one coloured man makes any trouble in a public house, the whole coloured people will be banned not to go there. If you report to the police he will simply say find somewhere that will serve you.

If you want to summon any person who assaults or insults you, and you go to the police, they will tell you they can do nothing about it because they were not present when the matter took place. But if any white man lay a report to them that a coloured man had done something wrong to him they will come and ask every coloured man till they find out. If we have trouble with white men as soon as the police arrive he will ask no statement from you before he will take you away to the police station and treat you as guilty.

Sometimes some of the white men will save us from injustice of policemen.

Pardon my incorrect English. I hope I have said enough. Thanks and best wishes.

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LETTER TO MENDÈS-FRANCE

ARNOLD ZWEIG

(From *Les Lettres Francaises,* 2nd December, 1954)

Monsieur le President du Conseil,

YOUR name evokes the memory of two French writers: the one who, in the time of my youth, represented the French literature of the past;* the other, who remains for us today and forever the symbol of the spirit of France, is Anatole France. For this reason permit a German writer, who loves France and who, since the First World War which he lived through at Verdun, has not ceased to struggle for peace and against war, to address you publicly. I could almost allow myself a little pleasantry and place my photograph beside the one which shows you wearing the beret of the 'chasseurs Alpins' and smoking your pipe: for we wore very similar uniforms and at that time no doubt we smoked the same tobacco, and each of us, a pipe. If I had met you before 1939, somewhere on the Moorish coast, or on the bridge of a *Messageries Maritimes* steamboat, both wearing glasses, in spite of my white hair we could have had a friendly conversation, and the warning I have to address to you today would have taken a less abrupt character, one less surprising according to convention, than this printed sheet which brings you it. Nevertheless, we both are fond of studying history, we have both fought that combination of brute force and stupidity symbolised by the name of Adolph Hitler: that is why I cannot let the occasion pass of explaining to you how a German writer in 1954 envisages the political and moral state of his people, of his neighbours and of Europe. And I hope you will be able to understand it, draw some inferences from it.

The German people's evolution has followed that of France with a delay of nearly two generations. The German response to your bourgeois revolution of 1789 only took place in 1848—and that was an unfortunate response, because the conditions necessary for the success of such a revolution did not exist in Germany. Here is yet another parallel, if you will allow me. In my opinion, the struggle with which we oppose German rearmament in 1954 finds its French equivalent from 1894: at first sight it seems that that has no similarity with the contemporary crisis; it dealt with the Dreyfus case, his conviction for high treason pronounced on a basis of forgery.

*Catulle Mendès, poet and critic (1841-1909).

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I need only ask the question: who then could legitimately speak for France? The military tribunal of Rennes and the accusers of the Jewish captain of artillery, or his defenders? We will undoubtedly agree on the reply. Those who represented France were the Picquarts, the Scheurer-Kestners, and above all, Zola: those who intrigued against her were those who claimed to be her ministers, from Cavaignac* to President Loubet.

And if, in the background of a trial which called into question the divine right of the French military caste of that time, there appeared anti-semitism, today we have an anti-communism, an anti-bolshevism even more ferocious, which Thomas Mann has rightly called the essential madness of our century. What arose from the 'essential madness' of 1890 and, through the howling of the White Russians, developed after the defeat of 1918 up to 1938, you know well, and you have fought it as we have. It is that which has made of the name of Adolf Hitler the symbol of the megalomania which leads to suicide. The French sociologists have always reproached us with that, and rightly.

Today, when Adenauer, again taking up this tradition of megalomania, wants to bring about a rebirth of the military caste, who have decidedly learnt nothing from two disasters, we appeal to the French sense of proportion and intelligence. We beg of you, do not ratify the Paris and London agreements before a Collective Security Conference has taken place, the only means of constructing a peaceful Europe. And this gesture is rendered indispensable by the new Soviet Note. It is not Adenauer who can speak in the name of Germany, whatever the appearances may be at this moment, but we German Partisans of Peace. . . .

At this date in 1894 which I have just recalled, the struggle between the real France and the France of the officials began. It was to last ten years but, at the end, the voice of truth triumphed, raised by writers of very different kinds, but equal in their courage and calibre, from Georges Clemenceau to Anatole France and above all, Zola. In this day and at this hour I could also enumerate the intellectuals of this advance guard—and first of all your compatriot Joliot-Curie—who since 1948 has drawn from the frightful Second World War the same conclusions as we former combatants of the First had drawn after the collapse of 1918. But behind Adenauer we find the same clerical and chauvinistic forces who, 60 years ago, put up the money for those who screamed about the 'treason' of Dreyfus, and in Germany this time they form the same guard of

*Cavaignac (1853-1905) as War Minister paraded the forged documents.

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defeated generals except that the cry of treason is now shouted at the communists, intellectuals and progressive christians of Germany. But the German people have learned much from their disaster. At the hour when our youth refuses to change its working clothes—which all cannot yet have—for a uniform, or as we say nowadays, a battledress, let me address to you a petition: Preserve the French people from suicide, from this Third World War which would transform the Europe we love into an atomic desert. The clerical industrialists, the beaten generals, the makeshift politicians, cannot halt the evolution which must lead to the end of wars of aggression. We want an end to this noise of battle which since 1793 has sent the youth of Europe to a premature grave. Let us remember always that Europe is not only Paris, Treves, London, Worms, Speyer, it is also Warsaw, Leningrad, Kiev and Moscow.

Help us to establish this European conference for which the wishes of our Asian comrades also call, the mother countries of our culture, China and India. And meanwhile, lay aside the ratification of the agreements of London and Paris.

When one reads in the *Journal des Goncourt* of the happiness of Theophile Gautier on making the culture and poetry of the Far East known to France, one can say to oneself that we are reaping in the domain of culture and politics a century afterwards, the fruits of this first friendly approach to the creative sources of humanity. And when at this hour we writers make the voice of the German people heard, we are continuing *mutatis mutandis* the task formerly undertaken by our French precursors and which is incorporated in the spirit of Europe. A similar humanist culture encircles the whole earth. What Christianity began 2,000 years ago is brought to a good end by Socialism today; none of us is so little or so great that there is no place for him in this immense work: to spare young Germans from wearing uniform, to put Picasso's Dove of Peace in place of the vanquished eagle is to liquidate the horror of Hitlerism, to open to our children, to our grand-children, but also to ourselves an era when creative work in all its fields will become the order of the day and the fanfare of real human progress. May the pale November sun, which nevertheless penetrates the clouds and comes through the garden gates to bring its light into my workroom, be a harbinger!

It is in asking you to help us to make this portent a firm reality that the German writer Arnold Zweig addresses you, *Monsieur le President du Conseil.*

Berlin, November 21, 1954.

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CHURCHILL'S SELF-PORTRAIT

PAT SLOAN

[*The following was written before the revelation by Churchill (in his Woodford speech of November 23) of his telegram to Lord Montgomery—which makes this review singularly appropriate.—Ed., L.M.*]

CHURCHILL'S latest volume* (in his version of what happened during the last war) will go down to history as a testament of evasion. Churchill intervened blatantly in Greece while Stalin, loyal to the Alliance and an understanding that Britain 'took the lead in Greece', 'kept very strictly to this understanding . . . in spite of the fact that all this was most disagreeable to him and those around him' (p. 369). Churchill's intervention in distant Greece was in order to suppress the patriotic anti-fascist Resistance Movement, and he boasts of this unblushingly and of the undignified subterfuges by means of which this policy was carried out.

But when the Soviet Government, for its part, took reasonable precautions to ensure that its neighbour Poland should be in popular anti-fascist hands after the war, this is treated by Churchill as some heinous crime! When, in Syria, General de Gaulle was 'determined to assert the position of France' in true Churchillian style, this is condemned by the old man because it 'ran counter to the policy *we* had consistently pursued' (p. 489, my itals.—P.S.). When Tito wants Trieste, this is described as 'uncontrolled land-grabbing' while the Anglo-American occupation of Trieste (which went on till last November) is simply 'to ensure proper administration' (p. 483).

Thus, from beginning to end of the volume, all are out of step but our Winnie. Even Roosevelt and Truman are not above criticism, especially when Truman dares to suggest that he meet Stalin alone, without Churchill. This, indeed, was an 'affront' (p.502). But when, on the other hand, Stalin took strong exception to conversations between the Western Allies and the Germans at Berne from which the Russians were excluded deliberately, it being at that time the Americans 'who particularly wished that the Russians should not come to Switzerland' (p. 390); it was flatly

* *The Second World War*, Vol. VI, by Winston Churchill (677 pp. Cassell, 30s.)

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denied to Stalin that there were any such conversations, and Stalin's protests were described by Churchill as 'insulting' (p. 388).

Again when Stalin comes to the rescue of Churchill in the Ardennes, in answer to a most urgent appeal for help, Churchill admits that this was

> a good example of the speed at which business could be done at the summit of the Alliance, and also because it was a fine deed of the Russians and their chief to hasten their vast offensive, no doubt at very heavy cost in life (p. 244).

But this does not stop him, only two months later, as he releases his anti-Soviet venom in a secret memorandum, from asserting to Eden that Soviet military pressure 'has never yet been exerted except in their own interest' (p. 391).

Not only does Churchill contradict his own statements, but he blatantly conceals from Stalin his real feelings. On May 4, 1945, for example, he told Eden that the 'proposed withdrawal of the United States army to the occupational lines which were arranged with the Russians and Americans in Quebec . . . would be an event which if it occurred, would be one of the most melancholy in history' (p. 438). This note was an expression of his view, already arrived at, that

> Soviet Russia has become a mortal danger to the free world . . . that a new front must be immediately created against her onward sweep . . . that this front must be as far east as possible (p. 400).

The cold war, in fact, had already been well launched by Churchill.

But while these are Churchill's true thoughts and feelings, he sends a message to Stalin via Mrs. Churchill (then in Moscow) on May 8, 1945, which says that 'it is my firm belief that on the friendship and understanding between the British and Russian peoples depends the future of mankind' (p. 477).

Thus, mouthing words of warmth and friendship, Churchill communicated with Stalin and pretended to the British public that he still regarded the U.S.S.R. as an ally. But behind the backs of the British people and of Stalin he was urging the Americans to violate existing agreements regarding the demarcation lines in Europe and was already treating the U.S.S.R. as a 'mortal danger to the free world.' On the basis of this duplicity was the cold war launched. Any Russian 'awkwardness' which followed was a natural reaction to Churchill's offensive.

So much for the evasiveness of the author. But apart from this demonstration of shamelessness, does his book throw light on

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the events of 1944-45 and British-Soviet relations at that period? Indeed it throws light on many questions, the truth of which cannot be hidden in the cloud of dissimulation that surrounds them. One of the major issues on which Churchill tries in this book to frame the U.S.S.R. is the question of Poland. Tears are shed over the abortive 'Warsaw uprising' of July-August, 1944, which was ordered by General Bor in agreement with London but not in agreement with the Soviet High Command. While Churchill tries to make out that the Russians stimulated the revolt and then refused to assist it, he does not deny Stalin's statement that the Soviet Command had not been informed (p. 118) and quotes Stalin's message of August 22, 1944, without comment, to the effect that

> from the military point of view, the situation which has arisen, by increasingly directing the attention of the Germans to Warsaw, is just as unprofitable for the Red Army as for the Poles (p. 120).

Moreover, while in introducing the subject Churchill writes that the revolt was started at a time when 'all reports indicated that in the very near future Poland would be in Russian hands' (p. 113), it is later admitted that the Soviet troops were only able to enter Warsaw after they had

> spent the autumn months in building up their forces after the extraordinary advances of the summer. In January they were ready . . . crossing the Vistula on both sides of Warsaw, they captured the city on January 17 (p. 288).

It should be noted, here again, that Churchill never mentions in the whole of his chapter on 'the Martyrdom of Warsaw' that it took the Russians not only four months, but a long process of 'building up their forces', before they were able to enter the city. It is clear from this admission that the Warsaw uprising was premature, was organised by General Bor and London without the knowledge of the Soviet Command, and, in Stalin's words, the whole tragedy would never have happened 'if the Soviet Command had been informed before the beginning of the Warsaw action and if the Poles had maintained contact with it' (p. 118). Thus, despite his venom, and despite all his wiles as an advocate for his own Polish friends, Churchill reveals that at the time of the uprising the Soviet army was in no position to save Warsaw, and for this very reason any encouragement of the uprising meant encouraging—again in Stalin's words—

> a reckless and terrible adventure which is costing the population large sacrifices (p. 118).

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Another subject on which important information is revealed by Churchill is the whole story of Soviet participation in the war against Japan. Did the U.S.S.R., as is now commonly alleged, rush into the war against Japan at the last moment in order to have a say in the final settlement? And did the U.S.S.R., in fact, share responsibility for the dropping of the atom bomb? Both these questions are clearly answered—or, rather, a clear answer can be found to both these questions, in Churchill's book. At Teheran, already, it was agreed that the U.S.S.R. should enter the war against Japan after Hitler's defeat.

> I most earnestly desire, and so, I know, does the President, the intervention of Soviet Russia in the Japanese war, as promised by you at Teheran as soon as the German Army was beaten and destroyed.

Thus wrote Churchill to Stalin on September 27, 1944 (pp. 186-7). 'We desire the entry of the Soviets into the war against Japan at the earliest moment,' said Churchill to Lord Halifax on May 14, 1945 (p. 501). But by mid-July, 1945, Churchill had changed his mind, had decided that 'we should not need the Russians' and tells Eden that 'it is quite clear that the United States do not at the present time desire Russian participation in the war against Japan' (p. 553). Hence, how grudgingly he reports that the Soviet Union, solemnly fulfilling promises given at Teheran and subsequently, at the urgent insistence of Churchill and Roosevelt,

> declared war on August 8, only a week before the enemy's collapse. None the less she claimed her full rights as a belligerent. (p. 558).

It is patently clear from all this that the atom bomb was dropped when it was known that the Russians were about to declare war on Japan, in fulfilment of a long-standing promise.

What of Russia's knowledge of the atom bomb?

The dropping of the bomb had been agreed between Britain and the U.S.A. on July 4 (p. 553). But 'a more intricate question was what to tell Stalin'. The President decided to tell him 'that we have an entirely novel form of bomb, quite out of the ordinary'. The President, so Churchill informed the Cabinet, 'reiterated his resolve at all costs to refuse to divulge any particulars' (p. 554). In fact, Stalin asked for no particulars, and Churchill later noted that he 'seemed to have no inkling of the momentous information about the new bomb' (p. 579) and 'no special knowledge of the vast process of research upon which the United States and Britain had been engaged for so long' (p. 580). Thus not only did Stalin share no

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responsibility whatever for the dropping of the bomb, but it is clear that the 'cold war' had already matured to a point where the Western Allies were concealing from Stalin the real nature of the new weapon they were about to use.

One other matter which recurs again and again in current controversy, which is illuminated by Churchill, is the alleged 'carve up' of 'spheres of influence' in Europe during the liberation from the Nazis. It is clear from the book that this idea of 'percentages' of influence in different countries was purely Churchill's. Already in May, 1944, Churchill anticipates a 'showdown with the Russians about their Communist intrigues in Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece' (p. 64). He got increasingly perturbed as Communist influence 'slid on before, as well as followed, the onward march of the mighty armies directed from the Kremlin' (p. 181). He therefore persuaded Roosevelt to agree that 'as a practical matter' the U.S.S.R. be allowed to 'take the lead in Roumanian affairs, while we would take the lead in Greek affairs' (p. 64). Reluctantly Roosevelt agreed to this for a trial period of three months, and, as a matter of practical military convenience, Stalin concurred also. Churchill then expresses the matter more concretely in 'percentages' of influence in the various countries. In practice this meant that the Soviet Government did not interfere at all in Greece; but it cannot be said that the British Government did not try its utmost to interfere in the Balkans and Poland.

On the surface, and read credulously and superficially, Churchill's book will help to perpetuate the cold war. Many readers, conditioned by the press to the sort of dissimulation which comes all too naturally to the British Foreign Office, will lap it up, swallowing opinion side by side with fact. Read intelligently, penetrating between the lines and tearing aside the curtain of prejudice, it can be a revelation and an education to all progressive people. The facts, the documents, are there in plenty. The contradictions between Churchill's own statements, and between his views and the reported facts, can be detected by the wary reader.

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Book Reviews

SACCO AND VANZETTI

The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti, by Howard Fast. (208 pp. The Bodley Head. *12s. 6d.*)

THIS very fine book could not have been published at a more fitting time. It is 28 years since the electrocution of Nicolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti horrified the civilised world. But it is only 19 months since the execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg horrified the world. And it is only a few weeks since the murder of civil liberties in America reached a new stage with the attack on militant trade unions and the outlawing of the Communist Party. The forces of 1927 are the forces of 1955. On one hand all the power of the most highly organised capitalist state in the world, with its ability to brutalise, to corrupt, to mislead and to intimidate. On the other hand the immense body of ordinary people, some of them misled, some intimidated —but all fundamentally opposed to the monstrous power that still controls their lives. And beyond these forces the world allies of both sides.

The peculiar strength of Howard Fast's talent is that he is able to show us these things not as impersonal forces, but as an intensely human struggle, tragic and triumphant, terrible and inspiring. His book is about people, about highly individual people, but he is always able to make us conscious of the wide battle scene in which they move.

His book begins at six o'clock on the morning of the execution day, August 22, 1927, and it ends with the midnight judicial murder. It shows us the warden of the prison who knows well that Sacco and Vanzetti are innocent and better men than he; it takes us to the State Governor of Massachusetts who could pardon the prisoners, but whose mind is a blank wall against which all pleas for mercy beat in vain. It looks at the judge who was vicious and malevolent in his sentence and is now uneasy. It gives us poignant glimpses of Sacco's wife and Vanzetti's sister, of the peasant delegations that went from Italian villages to plead with Mussolini for his intervention on behalf of two Italians. It goes to the picket lines and the huge demonstrations. And it recalls for us the tragic and noble figures of Sacco and Vanzetti themselves. All this done as it should be in restrained and simple writing, with an effort to see into the minds of the human beings involved on each side. The result is a book of great emotional impact, a memorable book. Yes, this is an appropriate moment for such a book. Appropriate also that it has been a choice of People's Books which makes it available to members at 5s. and greatly widens its circulation. For it not only commemorates the martyrdom of Sacco and Vanzetti; it also reminds us of the background to what is happening now.

But the balance has changed. Sacco and Vanzetti would be very happy to see how it has changed. Where there were 170 million people living under Socialism there are now 900 million. Where the peasants went in little delegations to plead with Mussolini there is now an immense workers' party. Where there was only unorganised resistance to war that the two men hated with all their hearts there is now a world-wide peace movement. And of course these also are reasons why the struggle in America sharpens. The memory of Sacco and Vanzetti calls aloud to us to put all our hearts into supporting their comrades in that struggle. PHILIP BOLSOVER

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character, and therefore a special readership with a response that no millionaire could buy. L.M. does not depend upon 'a devoted few'. Still less does it depend upon a few millionaires. But in a sense it does take millions to produce and to sustain it. For behind every issue stands the experience in struggle of millions, in all countries, and of many generations, at different stages towards reaching the common aim: the emancipation of man. The magazine has no aim but that; and in attempting to serve so tremendous an aim, its character is determined.

Looking Before and After

THE NUMBER you hold in your hands today in a matter of perhaps weeks, perhaps months, will be in the hands of fellow readers who for mere possession of it risk heavy fines, imprisonment—or worse. Although far off, a common aim is shared—shared too, with those who were struggling long ago. For a few days ago I held in my hands the first number of *The Commonweal* which William Morris as newly appointed editor was busily working on 70 years ago this month. One article he chose was an eye-witness's recollection of the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester of 1819, nearly 140 years ago. The struggling Socialists of 1885 needed to recognise their continuity with that fight, as we need to be reminded of the continuity of ours with the past and with those all over the world who continue it today. It takes the strength of millions; it brings the strength of millions. That is what it means to support and to own a journal of socialism. That is why we look forward with confidence to 1955, knowing that readers will win more and more people to share in the common aim—and to use ever more fully this Socialist weapon, LABOUR MONTHLY.

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